**ECET2 Post-Convening Reflection**

**Professional Development Reflection: Tammy Carpenter and J.J. LaBatte**

**Goals**

* To provide the Crooksville district a sampling of the ECET2 experience, namely the Colleague Circles and breakout sessions. It was our hope that the staff would feel empowered and have spirited conversations about either problems of practice or education opportunities.
* To provide the districts that don’t regularly talk with each other the opportunity to receive new perspectives or ideas in a relaxing environment facilitated by their fellow colleagues.
* Most importantly, to recognize staff for their daily work and have an open forum to celebrate their everyday successes.

**Introduction and Early Morning**

The session began with table assignments, breakout sign-ups, and a Tim Hortons breakfast. Staff was not placed in a particular order with their tables, as we wished to have a various set of opinions across the district with new and unfamiliar faces. To break the idea of isolation, it was imperative for the Colleague Circle to be done in a random order and be provided an opportunity to hear new perspectives.

Before the Colleague Circles began, a short ECET2 video was played detailing some of the events of the New Orleans convening. The staff was provided a look at the celebratory atmosphere and quality professional development that occurred over that given weekend. Afterwards, both Tammy and I spoke for a few minutes as to our personal experience and what we are hoping to bring back to our district in terms of motivation, perspectives, and support.

**Colleague Circles**

In groups of eight to nine teachers with a facilitator (Tammy and I as well as the Burr Oak attendees from last year), the staff participated in their first Colleague Circle. Following the provided protocol (see attached) the next hour was devoted to discussing, analyzing, and developing a method or solution to tackling a given problem of practice or issue in education. Popular topics might stem to differentiation, community outreach, assessments and literacy, engagement, and many others. It was the goal of the session that teachers were given a unique insight from multiple professionals concerning the issues an educator encounters daily.

**Breakout Sessions**

A few weeks earlier the staff was sent a Survey Monkey to gauge interest over multiple education topics. The most popular were then the basis for the six breakout sessions led by an expert amongst the district. These sessions included: differentiation in the classroom, growth vs. fixed mindset, community and parent outreach, technology implementation, flipped classrooms, and “my favorite mistake”. We asked that attendees to choose two sessions to visit—one being a topic they feel comfortable with and can participate in the conversation; and the second being a topic they wish to know more about.

Facilitators and experts were provided an in-depth definition of each session’s goals and a timetable protocol, but then they regulated the discussion and “un-conference” along with the attendees. Large and small sticky notes were provided in each breakout session to records thoughts, successes, opportunities, and unanswered questions. Also, to keep each room true to the theme of collaboration and elevation of fellow teachers, a motivational quote was written on each chalkboard.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive of these sessions. The informal discussion was fruitful and allowed teachers to be honest and open about any of these given topics, but also be provided extensive feedback and solutions if needed be. After the sessions, the staff was dismissed to lunch provided by the local BW3.

**Next Steps**

The next step was gathering the large sticky notes so some form of follow-up could be provided in the coming weeks. This can be in the form of another online survey or a helpful handout. It is our hope to keep the staff motivated and excited about their profession. We wish to harness the power of this ECET2 sampler and bring it back to the classroom, and of course pass it on to the student body as well. This small sampling was considered a successful test run of the potential ECET2 Ohio convening.